

REMARKS

I. Introduction

Claims 11 to 22 are pending in the present application. In view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks, it is respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable, and reconsideration is respectfully requested.

Applicants note with appreciation the acknowledgment of the claim for foreign priority and the indication that all copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received from the International Bureau.

The Office Action Summary indicates that attached to the Office Action is a PTO-1449 paper. However, no such PTO-1449 paper was attached to the Office Action or received by Applicants. Applicants respectfully request with the next Office communication an initialed copy of the PTO-1449 paper filed with the Information Disclosure Statement, which was filed on November 5, 2001.

II. Objections to the Drawings

As regards the objections to the drawings, enclosed herewith is one (1) replacement sheet including Figures 2 and 3. The changes made to Figures 2 and 3 address the objections raised in the "Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review." No new matter has been added. Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

III. Objections to the Specification

As regards the objections to the Specification, the Specification has been amended herein as suggested. No new matter has been added. Withdrawal of this objection is respectfully requested.

IV. Rejection of Claims 11 to 22 Under 35 U.S.C. § 112

Claims 11 to 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph as indefinite for allegedly failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter of the invention. As an initial matter, this rejection is not understood since the "focus during examination of claims for compliance with the requirement for definiteness of 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph is whether the claim meets the threshold requirements of clarity and precision," and the "essential

inquiry pertaining to this requirement is whether the claims set out and circumscribe a particular subject matter with a reasonable degree of clarity and particularity."

M.P.E.P. § 2173.02 (emphasis added). The Office Action does not assert that claims 11 to 22 lack clarity, precision or particularity and does not indicate the language that allegedly lacks definiteness. Indeed, it is respectfully submitted that there is nothing unclear or imprecise in the language of claims 11 to 22 as filed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, claims 11 and 22 have been amended herein without prejudice to be more fully consistent with the Specification and Figures. It is respectfully submitted that claims 11 to 22 fully comply with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, and withdrawal of this rejection is therefore respectfully requested.

V. Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation this indication of allowable subject matter contained in claims 11 to 22. It is believed and respectfully submitted that claims 11 to 22 as amended herein are in condition for immediate allowance.

VI. Conclusion

It is therefore respectfully submitted that all of the presently pending claims are allowable. All issues raised by the Examiner having been addressed, an early and favorable action on the merits is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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